

*Proposed Introduction
of Guyanese History into
Primary Classes?*

These objectives will therefore be:

- (a) to help the children, through a study of Guyana's past, to understand the economic, social and political problems confronting the Country today; and to help them to relate what is happening in Guyana to the situation in the Caribbean, and to some extent to that in the world as a whole;
- (b) to prepare the children for the time when they will become full citizens, and will be required to use their knowledge and understanding to find solutions to Guyana's problems;
- (c) to foster the development of national consciousness and civic pride, and at the same time to bring an awareness of the interdependence of individuals and groups within Guyana, as well as the interdependence of countries throughout the world.
- (d) to encourage the development of respect for the personality of every individual in Guyana and also outside of Guyana regardless of race, class or religion;
- (e) to cultivate an appreciation of the social and economic values of various occupations and institutions;
- (f) to lead children to the various sources of information existent in their own environment, and to help them to discover the objects and places of historical significance which are to be found in various parts of Guyana;
- (g) to help children to use their imagination in order to understand the motives and intentions of the people of an earlier age;
- (h) to help them to develop the skills of finding, organising, sifting and presenting information;
- (i) to help them, through the use of these skills, to approach the problems of life intelligently, critically and objectively.

It will be apparent from these objectives that the aim of the programme will be to use History as a means of fostering the development of Guyanese citizenship and nationalism. The nationalism intended, however, is not a narrow one, but nationalism in the wider context of world citizenship. It has been well said that citizenship without History has no root, and History without citizenship has no fruit. If the suggested programme is to serve its purpose, one would expect that at the end of a five-year course the children should have:

- (a) developed a pride and faith in Guyana and a respect for the dignity and worth of individuals, regardless of race, religion or socio-economic background;

- (b) learnt to think of Guyana as being as important and worthwhile as any other country in the world;
- (c) understood the basic principles upon which democracy is founded;
- (d) learnt to appreciate our Guyanese heritage;
- (e) learnt to appreciate the contributions of great Guyanese leaders and the sacrifices they made for the development of Guyana to the status of independent nationhood;
- (f) learnt to appreciate the interdependence of all the world's peoples;
- (g) come to realise that Guyana today is the result of the united efforts of all the Guyanese people and not of any one section alone;
- (h) learnt that we live in a world of change and to be prepared for change;
- (i) learnt that people make history - not only the great personalities, but the ordinary people as well.

3. THE APPROACH TO THE SELECTION OF MATERIAL:

History teaching is largely a matter of selection, and various approaches have been advocated in the selection of material and activities for the History programme.

The programme suggested in this report is based on the understanding that no one approach is perfect and that it is important that the history of Guyana and the West Indies should be the centre of interest.

A strictly chronological approach will enable pupils to develop a time sense, but at the same time is likely to confront them in the early stages with events and relationships that they may be unable to understand. The "topical" and "lines of development" plans permit the selection of topics, themes or areas of History related to children's interests and within their ability to comprehend, for detailed study at various stages of the course. The "patch" system and the purely social approach both possess advantages, in /on aspects that they make possible the study in depth of selected sections/of History, but suffer from the obvious disadvantage of presenting sections of History in isolation. The biographical approach (i.e., the teaching of History through the lives of great men), presents History as the story of man. This, of course, is desirable, but the treatment of lives without regard to times may lead to the creation of a false impression.

The most effective approach would be a combination of all these. Within a broad chronological framework provision may be made for the study in depth of certain topics or epochs, while proper attention would be given to the contributions of men and women to the various developments.

The programme as set out shows a series of topics and events which the teacher may alter to suit his purpose and to present in the way which, in his opinion, is best suited to the type of child with whom he has to deal.

4. HINTS ON TEACHING TECHNIQUES:

(a) Oral Work:

This may take many forms e.g., narration by teacher or pupils, description, exposition, discussion, oral reading.

Whatever the nature of the oral work the children should participate actively in it. Oral reading does not mean reading round the class or form, but the speaking by teacher or pupil of a few lines of prose or verse, at appropriate stages of the lesson, in order to create the desired effect. The section may be an extract from an important speech or enactment. Oral reading should in most cases be rehearsed.

While in History teaching there will inevitably be a great amount of oral work, the basic limitation of oral exposition must be borne in mind, and that is that the effect of such exposition is fleeting and momentary. Hence there is need for reinforcement through silent reading, note-making and other activities of this type.

The main purpose of the oral work will be to arouse interest in the topic or event being studied, to simplify or to supplement text book material, and to motivate research.

(b) Reading:

Silent reading for purposes of preparation, follow-up and research should play an important part in the History programme. The reading should be easy, purposeful and guided. It should aim at finding some definite information hence it may be done as a preparation for, or a follow-up to, narration, exposition and discussion.

(c) Use of Text-Books:

The use of a class text-book is recommended, but a variety of other reading material should be available, e.g., reference books, source books, novels, poetry books, magazines, periodicals, newspapers. Pupils should be encouraged to make full use of the text-books and other reading material. The teacher's role will be to arouse interest in the text-book material, to help pupils to understand and interpret this material, to supplement it where necessary, to make it "come alive," and to use the text-book as a means of promoting research.

(d) Writing:

Note-making is more valuable than note-taking. In the early stages of the course children should contribute to the compilation of notes and summaries by answering orally or in writing questions put by teacher, by supplying sentences and paragraphs under headings suggested by teacher, and by giving in their own words the substance of what was covered in the lesson. Eventually, however, the children should be able to compile their own summaries and to record clearly information from various sources.

Note-making by children is essential as a means of providing training in accuracy, precision and relevancy.

Writing activities may also include the copying of extracts from the texts of important speeches and documents, and the writing out of bits of prose and verse which vividly describe important events and developments.

(e) Use of Maps, Charts, Diagrams, Pictures, Models:

These may help to make clear parts of History that may not be easily explained in words. They may serve to highlight a particular point or topic; they are aids to teaching, and therefore should not be regarded as a substitute for the teacher with a well-planned lesson.

These aids should be discussed by pupils under the guidance of the teacher, if they are to serve their purpose of facilitating exposition and understanding.

(f) Time-Charts:

These may be of special value as a means of helping children to develop a time sense, establishing a relationship between one age or period and another, and making clear the connection between events in one area and those taking place in another during the same period. Such charts are especially effective as a means of providing the time and place links that are desirable when the topical, "lines of development" and "patch" approaches to the presentation of history are used.

Time-charts are best built up as the lessons on a particular topic or period progress and their construction should be a joint operation by teacher and pupils.

(g) Other Activities:

These include: drawing; dramatisation; collecting of newspaper clippings, pictures, stamps, labels; keeping of a History scrap-book; field trips and tours; projects.

(h) Correlation:

History teaching may be usefully correlated with work being done in other subject areas. Geography, Language and Literature, Religious Knowledge and Science offer great opportunities for such correlation and these opportunities should be fully exploited.

5. THE TRAINING OF HISTORY TEACHERS:

In Guyana's All-Age Schools our history staff will in the foreseeable future consist of trained teachers who have, during their course of training, specialised in history. It could be, also, that for some years to come there will still be with us a residue of untrained teachers, who are merely the holders of a pass in English History (1066 - 1452) at the G.C.E. The stark fact which stares us in the face is that for some time to come the All-Age Schools will have to depend on trained teachers at best, and untrained teachers, as at present, to teach history. It is a question, therefore, of letting down our buckets where we are.

Until the untrained teacher goes for training little or no influence can be brought to bear on him. Government will therefore have to concentrate on the teacher who goes for training either on the Pre- or the In-service Programme.

At the end of his training such a teacher should thoroughly the history of Guyana; less thoroughly, but in some detail, the history of the West Indies; and since the Guyanese people have come from various parts of the world, he would need to know a little more than the bald outline of the history of Africa, India, China and Europe. Nor should the history of the U.S.A. be omitted, for at various points the history of this great nation touches our own history; and, surrounded as we are by Venezuela, Brazil and Surinam, the College would be doing less than its duty if it did not acquaint our prospective history teachers with an outline of the history of these countries.

But a teacher trained to teach history in our schools should be more than a mere vehicle of content. He should be trained to implement the objectives and to achieve the desirable Outcomes set out in this programme. In following this course it will be found necessary to teach him the accredited methods of historical research and something of the theory of history. This should mean that he would be called upon to write a research paper - an exercise which will give him the necessary experience in choosing a subject and finding information on it. Such an exercise will also raise such problems as those of authenticity and credibility; of the use of quotations; of the use and misuse of footnotes; of the problem of cause, motive and influence.

Training such as that outlined above should in time be the only acceptable substitute for university training, but it is based on the assumption that the students of our secondary schools will before long be working towards an examination designed to make better Guyanese citizens than those who now emerge from the unrealistic tests of overseas examination syndicates.

The question of furthering the studies of history teachers is largely tied up with the future of the University of Guyana, for once a teacher has graduated from training college, the only other institution in which we are likely to find him is the University.

But whether he is a graduate, or merely a qualified teacher, a teacher of History will possess a number of qualities. He will, for example, be a person of wide interests - social, economic, political, philosophical, constitutional, cultural - and will be perpetually alive to the movements and developments of his age.

He will realise the importance of further reading into his own subject, and so will be constantly engaged in the process of widening his understanding of the affairs of mankind in general.

He will be a widely travelled man, for he will be fully appreciative of the relationship between History and Geography and of the personal enrichment which may result from direct contact with the problems as well as the opportunities of various countries.

He will, in addition, be a person of wide understanding and broad outlook, for his studies will have introduced him to a variety of situations and circumstances. This understanding will contribute to the development of tolerance and sympathy, which should be a necessary part of the equipment of one who is to guide children in the study of man in his various relations.

This is the type of History teacher that our training programmes at any level should seek to produce.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS:

A. That history teachers in Guyana should bear in mind in framing history programmes and pursuing objectives and desirable outcomes that while it is desirable to treat the past on its own merits, the most important aims in teaching history in Guyana should be:-

- (a) to study the past in order to explain the present economic, social and political problems confronting the country;
- (b) to prepare children to use their knowledge and understanding to find solutions to these problems;

- (c) to foster the development of national consciousness and the awareness of the interdependence of the nations of the world, and
- (d) to develop a pride and faith in Guyana and a respect for the dignity and worth of individuals, regardless of race, religion and socio-economic background.

B. That in the selection of history materials for programmes, a combination of the various approaches to history should be used.

C. That in the selection of teaching methods, teachers should endeavour in every lesson, to make proper use of text-books (including reference and source books); of maps, charts, diagrams, models, pictures, time-charts; to include some activity, such as drawing, dramatisation, field-trips, etc; and to teach the techniques of note-making and research. The correlation of history with other subject areas cannot be over-stressed.

D. That every teacher of history in Guyana should know thoroughly the history of Guyana; and less thoroughly, but in some detail, the history of the West Indies. As a background to the understanding of our cultural heritage the history of Africa, India, China and Europe must be known. And since the U.S.A., Venezuela, Brazil and Surinam are neighbours, their attitude to Guyana, as reflected in their history, must be studied.

E. That the suggested syllabuses which follow (Section 7) are set out as a series of topics, but that teachers are free to alter them to suit their own personal approach to history.

7. A SUGGESTED SYLLABUS IN HISTORY FOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND SECONDARY DEPTS.
OF ALL-AGE SCHOOLS

Form I

Theme: The Origin and Migrations of Man, culminating in the Coming of the Various Ethnic Groups to Guyana.

A Suggested Breakdown into Topics:

1. First Men in the World - How they lived and worked.
2. Scientific Explanation of the way in which various Ethnic Groups came into Existence.
3. The Migrations of Man:

The Migration from his Original Home in Africa to all parts of the East -

- . The Migration of Asiatics to America
- . The Migration of Europeans to America

4. The Founding of European Settlements in America.
5. The Founding of Essequibi and Berbice.
6. The Involuntary Migration of Africans to America.
7. How African Labour built up European Settlements in Guyana and the West Indies.
8. Mercantilism and the Struggle for Colonial Possessions
 - . The Dutch Wars
 - . The War of the League of Augsburg
 - . The War of the Spanish Succession
 - . The War of Jenkins' Ear
 - . The Seven Years' War
 - . The War of American Independence
 - . The French Revolutionary Wars.
 - . The Napoleonic Wars.
9. The Making of Guyana
 - . The development of Essequibo and Berbice
 - . The Rise of Demerara
 - . Creation of Administrative and Social Services
 - . Fixing of the Boundaries of Guyana.
10. The Emancipation.
11. The Coming of Portuguese, East Indians and Chinese to Guyana.
12. How Guyana became Independent.

Form II

Theme: Slavery and Emancipation.

Suggested Breakdown into Topics:

1. The Dilemma of Europeans on Coming to America
 - . Failure of Amerindians to meet European Labour demands
 - . Failure of European Indentured system.
2. The Example of the Past - Nearly all the Early Civilizations were built by Slave Labour
 - . The Egyptian Civilization
 - . The Babylonian Civilization
 - . The Cretan Civilization
 - . The Greeks
 - . The Romans
 - . Serfdom in the Middle Ages.

3. The Resort to Slavery
 - West African Civilizations
 - The Introduction of Mass Enslavement by the followers of the Muslim Faith
 - The Enslavement of Africans by the Portuguese.
4. The Cultivation of Sugar and Cotton in the West Indies and Guyana and their effect on the History of the Slave Trade - The Founding of Essequibo and Berbice.
5. The Asiento and the Triangular Trade.
6. The History of the Emancipation Movement.
 - Birth of Altruism in the great religions of the world - Hinduism, Confucianism, Buddhism, Christianity, Mohammedanism
 - The struggle of the European Nations to establish a Code of Human Rights - Effect on Slavery
 - The Economic Motivation of Slavery
 - The Great Slave Rebellions of the World (Including the Berbice Slave Rebellion) and their Effect on the Emancipation Movement.
7. The Last Days of Slavery in Guyana and the West Indies.
8. The Effect of Slavery on Our National Character
 - The Attempts of Europeans to rationalize slavery led to a general depreciation of the African character and led to the Development of Race Prejudice.
 - Absence of Pride in the work we are doing - Loss of artistic tradition
 - Tendency to look to the Master to do everything for us.

Form III

Theme: The Attempt of Europeans to Re-establish Slavery.

A Suggested Breakdown into Topics:

1. Afro-Guyanese find freedom and Dignity in the First Village Settlements - Their Monopoly of the Labour Market.
2. The Master Plan of the Planters to defeat the African's Monopoly of the Labour Market - Use of constitutional powers.
3. How the Impoverishment of India led the Indian Government to agree to the Exportation of her Nationals to many parts of the world
 - The Origin of Indo-Guyanese
 - The Economic situation in India prior to the Coming of Europeans

- . The Anglo-French Struggle for India
 - . The Industrial Revolution in Britain and its Effect on the Economics of India.
4. The Planters' Master-Plan comes into Operation - They use their control of the finances of the Colonies to force Britain to agree to the Importation of East Indians and Chinese
 - . Introduction of the First Batch of East Indians
 - . Full-Scale Importation.
 5. The Importation of Chinese
 - . Origin of the Chinese People
 - . Brief History of China
 - . Arrival of Chinese Immigrants.
 6. The Immigration System and how it worked in Guyana and Trinidad.
 7. The Efforts of Beaumont, Crosby and Des Voeux in Guyana and Guppy in Trinidad to alleviate the sufferings of East Indians Immigrants.
 8. The Setting up of East Indian Villages.
 9. The Failure of European Tutelage in Village Administration.
 10. The End of Immigration and Attempts to Revive it.
 11. The Effect of Immigration on Our National Character
 - . The Introduction of new peoples with alien cultures
 - . complicated the racial problem existing in the country.
 - . It prolonged the period of dependence since Immigrants soon looked to the Manager for everything.

Form IV

Theme: How the Education System helped the Guyanese and West Indian Peoples to gain Political Independence.

SUGGESTED Breakdown into Topics:

1. The Struggle between Planters and Missionaries over the Question of the Education of African Slaves.
2. The Negro Education Grant and its Operation.
3. The Competition of Beetroot Sugar and its Effect on the Education System - The Development of Alternatives to sugar - Gold Mining in Guyana - Boundary Dispute.

4. The Content of the Education System

- . Religious Content
- . English History
 - . Magna Carta - Habeas Corpus
 - . Confirmatio Cartarum
 - . The Petition of Right
 - . The Star Chamber
 - . Bill of Rights
 - . The Declaration of Independence
 - . The French Revolution
- . Latin - Brought us in contact with history of Greece and Rome. The contribution this contact made to Guyanese thought.
- . English Literature - Its contribution to our culture.

5. Early Products of the System

- . Thorne - from Barbados
- . Dargan
- . Brown
- . Luckhoo
- . J.B. Singh

6. The First World War and the Beginning of the Trade Union Movement.

7. The Garvey Movement and its Effect on Guyana and the West Indies.

8. The Beginning of the Movement for Colonial Liberation

- . Colonial Policy after the American War of Independence
- . New Nations of the Victorian Age - Canada, N.Z., Australia, South Africa
- . Dominion Status
- . The Doctrine of Trusteeship
- . The Indian Empire
- . New Ideas of Empire - Liberation

9. The Royal Commission of 1939

10. The Rise and Fall of the West Indies Federation

11. Guyana attains Independence.

Form V

Theme: Nation-Building

Suggested Breakdown into Topics:

1. Need for Government.
2. Local Government - Why we pay Rates.
3. National Government - Why we pay Taxes.

4. National Government - Our Constitution.

5. Some Legacies of the Colonial Past

- . Poverty
- . An Unfair Distribution of Taxation
- . Dependence on Others
- . Under-developed Resources
- . Social Stratification based on Colour
- . An Education System which created a Middle Class that was out of touch with the Masses
- . No Technical Education.

6. The need for Change

Our European Heritage carefully assessed. We accept what is good and reject what is bad.

7. The Re-Making of Guyana - The Fundamental Unity of the Guyanese People

- (a) All Guyanese have descended from homo sapiens - racial differences and were accident of evolution; white supremacy an accident of history
- (b) Our Common Sufferings under the Imperialists
- (c) The Achievement of Unity in 1953

8. The Re-Making of Guyana - The Example of the Old Nations.

9. The Re-Making of Guyana - The Essentials of Nation-Building

- . The Formation of a Development Plan
- . The Accumulation of Capital from Domestic and Foreign sources
- . The Training of Guyanese in the skills of management, production and citizenship
- . The Development of a Unifying Sense of National Purpose
- . The Provision by Government of goods and services as an incentive to the people to make sacrifices

10. Winning Respect for the Guyanese People.

11. The United Nations.

12. The Changing World.

8. ALTERNATIVE SYLLABUSES FOR THE COLLEGE OF PRECEPTORS AND THE GENERAL CERTIFICATE OF EDUCATION:

From frequent ministerial pronouncements members of the Sub-Committee gather that there will be a change in the content of syllabuses for external examinations, with the possibility that one or more local and/or an area examination Board will in the not too distant future replace the present external examination Boards.

Members felt that this would be a move in the right direction as they could not see how Guyana can be decolonized if the whole examination system is not decolonised.

In anticipation therefore, of these possible changes, members felt that it would be out of place to recommend alternative syllabuses to replace the present history syllabuses of the College of Preceptors and the General Certificate of Education examination.

SUGGESTED ALTERNATIVE SYLLABUSES

College of Preceptors Examination:

1. The Ancient Civilizations - Egypt (including Meroe) Mesopotamia, India, China, America (Inca, Chibcha, Aztec), West Africa (The Nok culture).
2. The Contributions of Greece and Rome to Western Civilization.
3. Contributions of the Middle Ages.
4. The Contributions of the Mohammedan Civilization.
5. The Contributions of the Renaissance and the Reformation.
6. The Expansion of Europe overseas, with emphasis on the establishment of settlements in Guyana and the West Indies.
7. Mercantilism and the Struggle among the European Nations for colonial possessions, culminating in the acquisition of Guyana by Great Britain.
8. The Sugar Industry and the Slave Trade.
9. The Emancipation.
- 10.. Immigration
11. The Rise of the Villages (including East Indian Villages)
12. Village Administration.

The General Certificate of Education:

European nationalization of the slave trade and slavery. The humanitarian motivation of Abolition and Emancipation. The Economic Motivation of Abolition and Emancipation. The Village Movement, its causes and effects. Immigration in Guyana and Trinidad. British colonial policy towards Guyana and the West Indies from 1833, Crown colony government. Education in Guyana and the West Indies. The Rise of Trade Unionism in Guyana and the West Indies. The Royal Commission of 1939, the cause of its appointment and its effect on the subsequent history of the Area. The Rise and Fall of the West Indies Federation. The role of the United States of America in Guyanese and West Indian history from 1822 to the present day. Recent developments.

Appendix A

SUGGEST TEXTS

HISTORY OF GUYANA

Vere T. Daly	"A Short History of the Guyanese People"	Daily Chronicle, 1966.
Vere T. Daly	"The Making of Guyana"	Daily Chronicle, 1967.

HISTORY OF THE WEST INDIES

Outline Study:

Carter, Digby & Murray:	"The Story of Our Islands"	Nelson 1963.
Sheila Dunker	"A Visual History of the West Indies"	Evans Brothers Ltd. 1965.
Wiseman	"A Short History of the British West Indies"	U.L.P. 1960.

Detailed Study:

Augier, Gordon, Hall & Reckord	"The Making of the West Indies"	Longmans, 1964.
A. Garcia	"History of the West Indies"	Harrap, 1965.

BACKGROUND READING

Carter, Digby & Murray	"Our Heritage"	Nelson, 1951.
Augier & Gordon	"Sources of West Indian History"	Longmans, 1962.
C.S.S. Higham	"Landmarks of World History"	Longmans.